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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
Sixty-third session

Summary record of the 1394th meeting
Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Monday, 29 February 2016, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Hayashi

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention (*continued*)

Combined eighth and ninth periodic reports of Haiti (CEDAW/C/HTI/8-9; CEDAW/C/HTI/Q/8-9 and Add.1)

1. At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Haiti took places at the Committee table.

2. Ms. Gelin (Haiti), introducing the State party's eighth and ninth periodic reports, said that, since the submission of its combined initial and second to seventh periodic reports, the Government of Haiti had spared no effort in implementing the Convention. A constitutional amendment adopted in 2011 had strengthened the principle of equality between the sexes by introducing a minimum 30 per cent quota for women at all levels of national life, particularly in public services, and had been followed by the adoption of the first national gender equality policy, covering the period 2014-2034, together with a six-year action plan.

3. Since its establishment in 1994, the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights had sought to combat the practices and customs that discriminated against women. Specifically, since 2007, the Ministry had undertaken an extensive campaign to eradicate stereotypical images of women. Although that campaign had had a significant initial impact, the past few years had seen a drastic increase in sexist practices and attitudes in Haitian society. In response, the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights, together with the Ministry of Public Health and the Population and the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, had been carrying out awareness-raising activities in schools and elsewhere to educate young people about gender-based violence, gender equality, sexual and reproductive health and other related issues.

4. Access to justice and the elimination of violence against women had been identified as ongoing concerns by women's organizations, prompting the Government to prioritize those goals. In 2013, the Directorate of Legal Affairs and the Office to Combat Violence against Women and Girls had been established within the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights to provide legal assistance to victims and, in 2014, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security had likewise decided to establish legal assistance offices to strengthen national support mechanisms for female victims of violence. Two such offices were already in operation. In addition, as part of its judicial reform programme, the Government had drafted a revised version of the Criminal Code that established severe penalties for the perpetrators of gender-based violence. The draft was currently pending adoption by the legislature.

5. A bill on the prevention, punishment and elimination of violence against women, which had been drafted with inputs from all sectors of society, would also be voted on by the current legislature. Women's organizations were actively lobbying parliamentarians to secure the bill's swift adoption. The second National Plan to Combat Violence against Women, covering the period 2012-2016, took a three-pronged approach that entailed increasing support for victims of violence by establishing the aforementioned legal assistance offices; improving the collection and management of data on violent incidents by creating a dedicated database, now operational since December 2015; and conducting a nationwide campaign to prevent violence against women and inform victims of their rights and of the resources available.

6. The Government had expanded the enrolment capacity of the Legal Service Training College with a view to increasing the number of women working in the judiciary. As a result, half of the 2014 intake of 66 students had been women. The Training College also

organized regular awareness-raising events focusing on the international conventions related to women's rights that had been ratified by Haiti, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It was hoped that judges would apply the provisions of those conventions in subsequent decision-making.

7. The National Health Plan for the period 2012-2022 placed great emphasis on sexual and reproductive rights. Its objectives included doubling the rate of family planning use, eliminating HIV/AIDS transmission and halving infant mortality. Considerable progress had already been made. Over the past five years, 67 per cent of pregnant women had benefitted from the minimum four prenatal visits recommended and 76 per cent had been vaccinated against tetanus. Maternal mortality had dropped from 630 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2006 to 330 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2015. However, early pregnancy and HIV infection was still significant concerns: 0.9 per cent of young people between 15 and 24 years old were HIV-positive and that percentage rose with age. HIV was more prevalent among girls than among boys. The decriminalization of abortion, which was still an offence under the current Criminal Code, was being considered as part of the judicial reform process.

8. The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training had concluded a number of cooperation agreements with the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights with a view to guaranteeing equal access to education and training for women and girls. One of the Government's priorities was to provide free universal education; to date its flagship programme to realize that goal had benefited over 76,000 boys and 75,000 girls nationwide. Enrolment and retention rates for girls and women in primary, secondary and tertiary education had both risen, and women had represented 42 per cent of total enrolment in vocational training in 2013. However, women still tended to choose fields traditionally associated with their gender that often did not match the needs of the labour market and the opportunities it offered. There was therefore an occupational gender gap.

9. The adoption of the 30 per cent quota, combined with other measures, had significantly increased the number of women in positions of influence. For example, around 38 per cent of ministerial posts were currently occupied by women and women accounted for at least one out of every three members of municipal councils — a trend that augured well for women's wider participation in local government. Although many more women had run for office in the most recent elections than previously, it was nonetheless regrettable that not a single woman had been elected to the Parliament. Economic, cultural and psychological factors had contributed to that result, as had the atmosphere of violence prevailing during the electoral process.

10. Poverty and living conditions in Haiti had grown much worse in recent decades. More than half the population lived in extreme poverty and three quarters lived below the poverty line. Women were disproportionately affected as they often suffered discrimination when attempting to access land and other essential resources such as credit. Despite playing a key role in the economy, women faced a "glass ceiling" in the civil service and widespread unemployment and exclusion from the formal labour market led many to seek independent sources of income, usually in the informal sector. However, women working in the informal sector did not have stable income, were deprived of the right to social security and protection, and consequently were the most severely affected by socioeconomic crises and global sociopolitical instability.

11. The Government had adopted a number of measures to improve women's economic status. For example, women were being encouraged to take up jobs in technology or science; guidelines were being developed to ensure transparency, traceability and equal opportunities in civil service recruitment; an equitable social security system that protected women and men equally was being created; efforts were under way to improve the working conditions of women in the informal sector; the 30 per cent quota for women was

automatically applied in labour-intensive projects undertaken by the Ministry for Public Works; and a programme for the socioeconomic reintegration of young single mothers had been launched.

Articles 1 and 2

12. **Ms. Pomeranzi** said that, while the Committee was aware of the significant challenges faced by the Government during the prolonged rehabilitation period that had followed the devastating earthquake of 2010, it was nonetheless concerned about the gender-based discrimination and violence that women and girls continued to suffer in Haiti. It was difficult to understand why only three of the eight laws that the State party had mentioned during its previous dialogue with the Committee had since been enacted. The State party should clarify the time frame for the adoption of all pending legislation and the enactment of laws already adopted. She was also interested to know the extent to which the national gender equality policy might help to resolve the problems inherent in the legislative process.

13. It was regrettable that marginalized women continued to struggle to obtain access to justice, in spite of governmental and NGO efforts. She would appreciate additional information on the structure and financing of the formal justice system and the measures taken by the State to combat corruption and ensure the impartiality and credibility of the judiciary. Further information was also needed about the role of the Ombudsman's Office, which had been designated as the national human rights institution in 2012. Specifically, she would like to know whether the Office had a dedicated focal point for the receipt of complaints from female victims.

14. **Ms. Patten** said that, although the number of internally displaced persons had fallen and most of the camps in Haiti had closed, durable solutions had yet to be found, especially for women and girls. She would like to know how the State party was addressing the challenges facing women and girls, particularly those at risk of multiple forms of discrimination such as widows, the elderly and women with disabilities. It would also be useful to know the extent to which displaced women were involved in planning and implementing assistance programmes, camp management and decisions concerning longer-term solutions; whether steps had been taken to establish a disaster plan in conjunction with international stakeholders; and to what extent the local population, including internally displaced persons, were involved in that process.

15. **Mr. Bazelais** (Haiti) said that, unfortunately, women's rights were not enshrined in law in Haiti. Aware of its obligation to provide women with access to justice, however, the Government had set up a system of mobile courts and legal assistance offices for women unable to reach a regular court. Moreover, prompted by the realization that male judges were often inclined to dismiss women's claims, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security was seeking to increase the number of women judges in order to comply with the 30 per cent minimum quota. Currently, there were only 74 women judges, compared with 874 men, but women accounted for around half the intake of the Legal Service Training College.

16. There were more men than women in pretrial detention but, until recently, women detainees had been held in atrocious conditions, sometimes accompanied by their children. A prison that met international standards had consequently been built in the west of the country. In 2015, a total of 16 women and 2 minors were being held in long-term pretrial detention.

17. There were 18 judicial districts in Haiti, 5 courts of appeal, 1 court of cassation, 18 courts of first instance and 185 magistrates' courts. All courts had been specifically requested by the Ministry to ensure that women's claims were heard and that women were provided with the necessary assistance.

18. The Ministry constantly strove to eliminate corruption in the judiciary. Judges were under the oversight of the High Council of the Judiciary and were required to reach their decisions in accordance with the law and their consciences. Some progress has been made: for example, penalties had been imposed upon a judge found guilty of corruption. Complaints could be addressed to the Ombudsman's Office, which shared them with the Ministry and the High Council.

19. **Ms. Gelin** (Haiti) said that there were 2 million people living in camps despite efforts to reduce their number. In an initiative sponsored by the International Organization for Migration, women officials had been appointed to visit both the camps and the settlements to which families had been relocated in order to identify health problems or domestic abuse. Such officials were backed up by community associations that could help women get to hospital or to a court. The situation was very bad, but the Government did provide some assistance.

20. The Government's action on disaster risk reduction had not been adequate. As it had been reluctant to make unpopular decisions, people had been allowed to build houses in dangerous locations. If such building was not monitored daily, people who had been displaced would simply return. The Ministry of Justice and Public Security was working with the Directorate for Civil Protection to identify areas that were safe from disaster. In addition, over the past 25 years, the Ministry of Public Health and the Population had built 65 health centres and hospitals in order to cover even the most remote areas.

21. **Ms. Pomeranzi** asked how the head of the delegation, in her role as Director General of the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights, could help translate the gender equality policy into law. The lack of legislation suggested that there were problems at the political level. She also wished to know whether the delegation had any data on problems already resolved by the new legal assistance offices.

22. **Ms. Schulz** said she found it surprising that a draft bill mentioned in the State party's previous report had still not been adopted and would like to know what obstacles there could be to the adoption of a bill. Even after a law had been adopted by both houses of Parliament, up to four years could pass before it was promulgated. She would be grateful to learn more about the State party's institutional mechanisms and its legislative process.

23. **Ms. Patten** said that the purpose of her earlier question had been to seek information about the involvement of displaced women in decisions affecting them and their integration within local neighbourhoods. She would also be interested to know what the impact of rental subsidies had been and whether the recommendations of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons had been implemented.

24. **Ms. Pimentel** said that, according to the information at her disposal, legal proceedings in Haiti were generally conducted in French even though 80 per cent of the population did not speak that language. If that was the case, all the State party's efforts at legal reform would go to waste.

25. **Ms. Romulus** (Haiti) said that the Paternity, Maternity and Filiation Act and the Human Trafficking Act had been promulgated in 2014. Only the draft act on the labour conditions of domestic workers remained to be promulgated. The newly elected Government would ensure that it finally entered the statute book. The gender equality plan was made up of 6 strategies, 7 objectives and 139 measures and a campaign to raise awareness across the country was already under way.

26. With regard to the question of the language used in the courts, she said that parties to proceedings were free to speak Creole if they wished. Depositions were made in both languages and some judgements were also delivered in Creole. Where a participant did not understand French, her lawyer could provide a translation.

27. **Ms. Gelin** (Haiti) said that French was the language of the educated class. However, Creole could be used in the courts and both French and Creole were used in the civil service. Under the 16/6 project, which had now been discontinued, families had been given a rental subsidy for one year after their first displacement to enable family members to find work and pay their rent. As for whether women could participate in decisions on situations affecting them, the answer was "no". Decisions were imposed on them. Indeed, the economic situation was such that foreign organizations providing assistance frequently acted without informing the Government. The Government intended to take matters back into its own hands, so that it knew what action was being taken.

28. **Ms. Romulus** (Haiti) said that, once the draft act on gender equality had been adopted, the country's international partners would be expected to comply with the law and with existing policy.

29. **Ms. Gelin** (Haiti) said that the problem with the promulgation of laws was that any draft found to contain material errors had to be returned to Parliament for further scrutiny. The promulgation of the Paternity, Maternity and Filiation Act had been delayed for that reason, even though it had passed through both houses some time previously. The Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights had urged parliamentarians and senators to adopt the draft act on gender equality, notwithstanding any errors, and they had promised to do their best.

30. **Ms. Haidar** said that, while the Committee appreciated the State party's difficulties in preparing a report following the earthquake of 2010, she would be interested to know whether it was correct that the budget allocated to the Ministry on the Status of Women and Women's Rights still amounted to only 1 per cent of the national budget. The Ministry could be effective only if it had sufficient financial, as well as human and technical, resources. She commended the establishment of focal points to promote gender mainstreaming in ministries, but would like to know whether those focal points had had the expected impact and whether their training was monitored and evaluated.

31. In view of the importance of partnership with civil society, which could cover areas inaccessible to the State authorities, she wished to know what was being done to improve coordination networks. The Government might consider establishing mobile networks, along the lines of the mobile networks for justice mentioned by the delegation, to inform women, and especially women with disabilities and internally displaced women, of their rights. The State party's action to eliminate violence against women was commendable, but she was dismayed that there was no gender balance in its disaster risk reduction policies. Women should not be regarded only as victims. There was no reason why they should not also take on managerial roles.

32. **Ms. Nwankwo**, commending the State party for the adoption of the 30 per cent minimum quota for women at all levels of national life, said that she would like to know what the situation was in the civil service, especially at decision-making levels, and whether the quota was supported by an equal opportunities policy.

33. She noted that a proposal to integrate the 30 per cent quota into the draft electoral law, in the form of provisions for the inclusion of women in lists of candidates for election to the posts of mayor and deputy mayor, had been voted down in the House of Deputies and that some women deputies had also voted against the adoption of a proposed amendment to the Electoral Provisions Act under which the constitutional gender equality principle would be integrated into the Act, in line with the treaties ratified by Haiti. Clearly, awareness-raising and education about the need for temporary special measures were required for parliamentarians, government officials and employers, as well as the public. The inclusion of quotas in the Constitution was not enough: implementing guidelines with specific targets and time frames were necessary to ensure full implementation. In that connection, she

would like to know whether the current temporary special measures included penalties for political parties and leaders of other sectors that failed to comply with the 30 per cent quota. She would also be glad to know what action was planned to protest against the National Assembly's decision to reject articles 58 and 62 of the Electoral Provisions Act and urge the Senate to reinstate those articles.

34. **Ms. Gelin** (Haiti) said that, owing to exchange rate fluctuations, the budget allocated to the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights had decreased in real terms and currently stood at around 0.3 per cent of the national budget. The Government had developed strong partnerships with civil society and international organizations over recent years, which had resulted in the launch of various women's initiatives, including the establishment of a national database of cases of domestic violence against women and their outcomes. Activities to raise women's awareness of their rights under the Convention had also been conducted at the regional and local level and mobile teams had been deployed to provide support to women in remote and rural areas. Women living in areas affected by natural disasters had been moved to safety and had been provided with specialist medical kits tailored to their health-care needs.

35. **Ms. Romulus** (Haiti) said that, with support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), information-sharing networks had been established across the country to enable women to learn more about their rights and voice their opinions on proposed amendments to gender equality legislation.

36. **Ms. Gelin** (Haiti) said that only one woman minister had voted against the electoral quota for women; she had been of the view that gender inequality no longer existed in national politics. A far greater number of women had been encouraged to run for political office since the adoption of the quota, but women often lacked the resources needed to conduct political campaigns. Many political parties had also experienced difficulties in meeting the 30 per cent quota owing to a lack of women candidates wishing to stand. The quota had been more effective at the local level and 149 women representatives had been successful in the recent elections.

37. **Ms. Haidar** asked what measures had been taken to ensure that the Government implemented its gender equality policies and provided adequate human, financial and technical resources to the national machinery for the advancement of women.

38. **Ms. Ameline** said that she would like to know what steps had been taken to optimize the use of international funding in meeting the Government's gender equality targets and promoting women's rights.

39. **Ms. Gelin** (Haiti) said that penalties had not yet been established for political parties that failed to meet the 30 per cent quota. Women made up around 32 per cent of the civil service workforce but held only 7 per cent of senior decision-making positions. Efforts had been made to encourage all Government ministries to mainstream gender and prepare gender-sensitive budgets. However, a comprehensive approach to gender issues had not yet been adopted. The Government remained committed to working in partnership with international organizations to guarantee gender equality and women's rights and intended to take a leading role in implementing development projects and initiatives aimed at supporting women.

Articles 5 and 6

40. **Ms. Al-Dosari** said that she would welcome additional information on the measures taken to strengthen the general public's understanding of gender equality and ensure that the media portrayed women in a positive and non-stereotypical light. She also wished to know more about the awareness-raising activities conducted by the Government during

national women's month, which ran from 8 March to 3 April, and the annual carnival festivities.

41. **Ms. Acar**, noting the recent increase in sexist discourse, asked what policies had been implemented to change social and cultural patterns and eliminate gender-based stereotypes in Haiti.

42. **Ms. Arocha Domínquez** asked what steps had been taken to expedite the adoption of the bill to combat violence against women; what percentage of the budget had been allocated to the National Plan to Combat Violence against Women; and what measures had been taken to involve women's organizations and international organizations in its implementation.

43. **Ms. Haidar** asked whether the State party intended to adopt a national action plan to combat trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and to tackle trafficking for the purposes of domestic servitude and forced prostitution. Additional information on the measures taken to provide educational and economic alternatives to domestic servitude and prostitution and on the rehabilitation and reintegration possibilities available for women wishing to leave prostitution would also be useful, as would details of any Government efforts to implement national anti-trafficking legislation and establish Government-run shelters for women victims of human trafficking.

44. **Ms. Romulus** (Haiti) said that since 2007 the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights had been running an awareness-raising campaign during national festivities such as the Carnival that was based on the slogan "My body, my dignity". Gender stereotyping existed in school textbooks but the authorities were working with publishers and school principals to address that issue. Anti-trafficking legislation had been in force since 2014 and an interministerial anti-trafficking committee, composed of 11 members, had been established in 2015 under the purview of the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights.

45. As no communal elections had been held since 2011 there was no electoral mandate for the implementation of the communal decree against child prostitution. Elections were currently taking place, after which it should be possible to implement the decree. Work on the framework legislation on violence against women had been interrupted by the 2010 earthquake but had resumed in 2011 and the now finalized bill would be submitted to the legislature in the near future.

46. **Ms. Gelin** (Haiti) said that the endorsement of the legislation on violence against women was not a foregone conclusion. However, many parliamentarians were concerned about women's issues and the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights would make every effort to encourage them to ratify the new law. The interministerial anti-trafficking committee worked with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and had recently participated in a two-day workshop on trafficking and child sex tourism organized by the Embassy of the United States of America. The database established in December in 2015 in implementation of the second National Plan to Combat Violence against Women included information gathered from women's organizations and State institutions. Its focus was violence against women but it also contained information on related issues such as health and education.

47. Insufficient attention had been accorded to cultural practices that reinforced gender inequality and gender stereotypes. In fact, certain manifestations of mass culture in Haiti, such as songs, were often highly disrespectful of women and their bodies. The authorities intended to use media campaigns to raise awareness about the issue and the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights had organized a number of supporting initiatives, including a concert of songs that were respectful of women and a poster campaign celebrating Haitian heroines of national independence.

48. **Ms. Pimentel** said that she commended Haiti for its media campaigns to combat inequality and stereotyping but wished to know whether the media itself had a code of conduct to prevent the daily transmission of discriminatory and offensive images of women. She would appreciate information about specific actions taken by the authorities to deal with incest and the rape of girls as young as 2 years of age. She also invited the delegation to clarify the scope and content of the communal decree against prostitution and explain if and when Haiti intended to criminalize the exploitation of prostitution. Lastly, she asked what was being done to combat the misuse of medical certificates in cases of sexual violence; whether the authorities were aware of the consequences of that misuse for women and girls with disabilities; and what alternatives were being offered to women and girls who were forced to offer sex in order to secure food and ensure their survival.

49. **Ms Arocha Domínguez** said that she wished to know more about how the Plan to Combat Violence against Women was being financed. She understood from the delegation's replies that there was no State financing and that the Ministry had to fund the plan from its own resources, with the support of non-State organizations. Although both men and women suffered violence at the border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic and women there might not be targeted because of their sex, it was important to note, especially in light of the Committee's general recommendation No. 28, that discrimination depended not only on the sex of the victim but also on the impact of the actions involved.

50. **Mr. Bazelais** (Haiti) said that incest, in the sense of marriage between blood relations, was prohibited under the Civil Code and was not a frequent occurrence in Haiti. The widely reported rape of a 2-year old girl was not the only case of its kind but such cases were referred to the courts and the perpetrators were punished. The increased reporting rate was due to the fact that people throughout the country were more aware of rape than they had been in the past. Rape cases could not always be proven, owing to delays and other problems, but the authorities were taking steps to make prosecutions more effective and prevent situations in which perpetrators and victims' families reached a compromise agreement.

51. **Ms. Romulus** (Haiti) said that the communal decree against child prostitution was also designed to combat the sale of pornography in public places and prohibit minors of either sex from visiting bars and nightclubs. The decree could be implemented after the forthcoming elections and the renewal of the electoral mandate and would help to strengthen existing anti-prostitution provisions in the Criminal Code.

52. The Government had taken steps to reduce violence at the border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic, particularly in view of the heavy presence of women who went there to sell their wares. The authorities were aware of the difficulties women sometimes faced in obtaining a medical certificate to validate a complaint of sexual violence and, in 2007, the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security and the Ministry of Public Health and the Population had signed a memorandum of understanding to address those difficulties. Unfortunately, women were still sometimes obliged to pay to obtain medical certificates. However, the three ministries intended to issue new directives to ensure that the memorandum was correctly implemented.

53. **Ms. Gelin** (Haiti) said that the penalties for rape had recently been increased. Rape was now considered a serious offence and perpetrators faced prison terms of up to 15 years. The National Plan to Combat Violence against Women was not underfunded and it was not for lack of funds that some rape offences went unprosecuted. Sometimes a sense of shame led victims or their families to abandon a complaint.

54. **Ms. Romulus** (Haiti) said that a decree on sexual violence had been issued in 2005 that established fixed penalties for the different types of offence. Situations in which perpetrators and victims' families reached a compromise agreement generally occurred in

rural areas. Either a marriage was arranged between the perpetrator and victim or, more frequently, a compensatory financial settlement was agreed.

Articles 7 to 9

55. **Ms. Hofmeister** said that women in Haiti faced very difficult circumstances, partly due to natural disasters such as the 2010 earthquake and the cholera epidemic, but also because of poverty and severe gender bias. She was concerned that the minimum 30 per cent quota for women enshrined in the Constitution was not enforced in electoral lists and that offenders faced no legal penalties. It was important to remember that the outcome ultimately desired was not respect for the quota but parity between men and women. The delegation should provide accurate, up-to-date information on the participation of women, including disabled women, in politics, the civil service, international bureaucracy, the judiciary and the private sector.

56. Noting that the inclusion of women and girls was a question of political will and vital for the reconstruction and recovery of the nation, she asked how the Government intended to revise discriminatory legislation and establish a modern legal framework with democratic structures based on the rule of law and fair access to justice; how it combated gender bias and the exclusion of women and girls in society; what part male parliamentarians played in those efforts; and what measures were being taken to empower women and ensure that their voices were heard on issues such as sustainable development and climate change. She would also like to know what steps were being taken to protect human rights defenders from violence.

57. **Ms. Schulz** said that she was concerned about the more than 250,000 persons of Haitian origin currently living in the Dominican Republic who had been rendered stateless by a 2009 ruling of the Dominican Constitutional Court. The situation was particularly difficult for the women among them and she wished to know what political and legal measures were being taken to restore their nationality and whether discussions were underway with the Dominican Republic to ensure that the persons concerned were not expelled. If, in the worst case scenario, they were expelled, did the Haitian authorities have an emergency plan in place to protect them from violence, especially the women and girls?

58. She was also concerned by the fact that between 2.5 and 3 million undocumented persons living in Haiti were unable to access basic services. Such persons were at risk of statelessness and current nationality laws appeared to afford no protection against that contingency. She asked whether a timetable had been set for the far-reaching retroactive registration programme necessary for that segment of the population. The authorities should also consider abolishing the dual system in which civil registry offices operated alongside branches of the National Identification Office and introducing a single unified registration system. Lastly, she asked whether Haiti intended to ratify the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness and to issue new nationality laws that were consistent with article 9 of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 32.

59. Haiti was increasingly becoming a place of transit for victims of trafficking but, despite having ratified the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the State party did not appear to have a law defining the conditions under which asylum could be requested and granted. She wished to know whether the authorities had any plans to enact such legislation.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.